

BARRETT Charles William

Name: Charles William Barrett

Born: 2 November 1902

Rank: Captain

Service Number: 70330

**Regiment/Unit/Station:
Intelligence Corps**



Died: 24 February 1973

Early life:

Bill, as he was known, came from Ramsgate, Kent and enlisted in the Royal Artillery on 22 August 1922 and later in 1926 he transferred to the Army Education Corps. He served in India, Belfast and Dover before being sent to Singapore in 1937, as a Warrant Officer in Changi Garrison.

Wartime experience:

In 1940, Bill was commissioned, transferred to the Intelligence Corps and posted to Fort Canning. His wife and son evacuated from Singapore on 31 January 1942, just two weeks before he was captured and sent to Changi camp. On 27 October 1942, Bill was sent to the Thai/Burma railway and spent time in Kinsao, Kanburi, Kanu and Upper Kanu, working on 'Hellfire Pass'. He contracted malaria, scabies, had septic feet and large tropical ulcers on his legs. He moved to Tamuang in June 1944 then to River Valley camp in Singapore, in charge of Party 77. On 4 September he embarked on the hell ship, Kachidoki Maru, which was torpedoed and sunk 8 days later, on 12 September. He was picked up by an oil tanker and went on to Keelung, Formosa then to Moji, Tokyo and Sakata, Japan, where, as the POW Administrative Officer, he maintained a register of POWs and their next of kin, and records of supplies and rations.

He survived captivity and sailed to Vancouver on HMCS Prince Robert where he recuperated before sailing to Southampton on SS Queen Mary.

Life after return:

Bill left the army and became a schoolteacher, before re-joining the Royal Army Education Corps, at the rank of Captain. He retired from the army in 1957 and returned to teaching until he retired in 1968. Sadly, Bill passed away in 24 February 1973, aged 71.



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